

# Semantic MediaWiki on the WIKIA environment

(a.k.a. The struggles and benefits of  
using SMW in a multi-wiki company)

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# Where does SMW & Wikia Stand Now?

- Wikia has just crossed the 100,000 wiki mark.
- Wikia has more than 2,000,000 registered users.
- Semantic MediaWiki is enabled on only 92 wikis.
  - However, a good number of these are well established, large wikis such as Yu-Gi-Oh, The Third Turn, and World of Warcraft.
  - FamilyPedia uses Semantic MediaWiki + Semantic Forms to run most of their site design.

# Where does SMW & Wikia Stand Now?

- Currently, SMW has only a number of Semantic MediaWiki extensions available to users – Forms, Result Formats, Drilldown, Maps
- <http://trac.wikia-code.com/browser/wikia>

# Things hurting a SMW-Wikia Relationship: Practicality

- 1) Need for site-to-site conformity and operating stability means that Semantic code should be consistent and well-reviewed
  - That is to say that “tweaking” code (usually CSS modifications) to please one wiki with an extension means EVERY wiki with that extension enabled will see the changes
  - Because we have to consider all the wikis that will be affected by an upgrade, Wikia does a comprehensive code review process. This usually means that SMW code on Wikia servers are usually several versions behind the current SVN.











# Things hurting a SMW-Wikia Relationship: Usability

- 2) Wikia has a target audience significantly different from a traditional MediaWiki audience.
  - Nearly 2/3rds of wikis on Wikia are in the “entertainment” category.
  - Most users are in the 13-30 year old category, including many computer novices and those unfamiliar with coding of any form.
  - We rely on blogs, polls, forums to be the primary form of bringing users back the site, content is secondary. These are more effective at allowing users to communicate with each other than the traditional article/talk system.
    - How does SMW fit into this?
    - How would new users react to seeing complex SMW code?






























# Things hurting a SMW-Wikia Relationship: Usability

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# Things hurting a SMW-Wikia Relationship: Technical

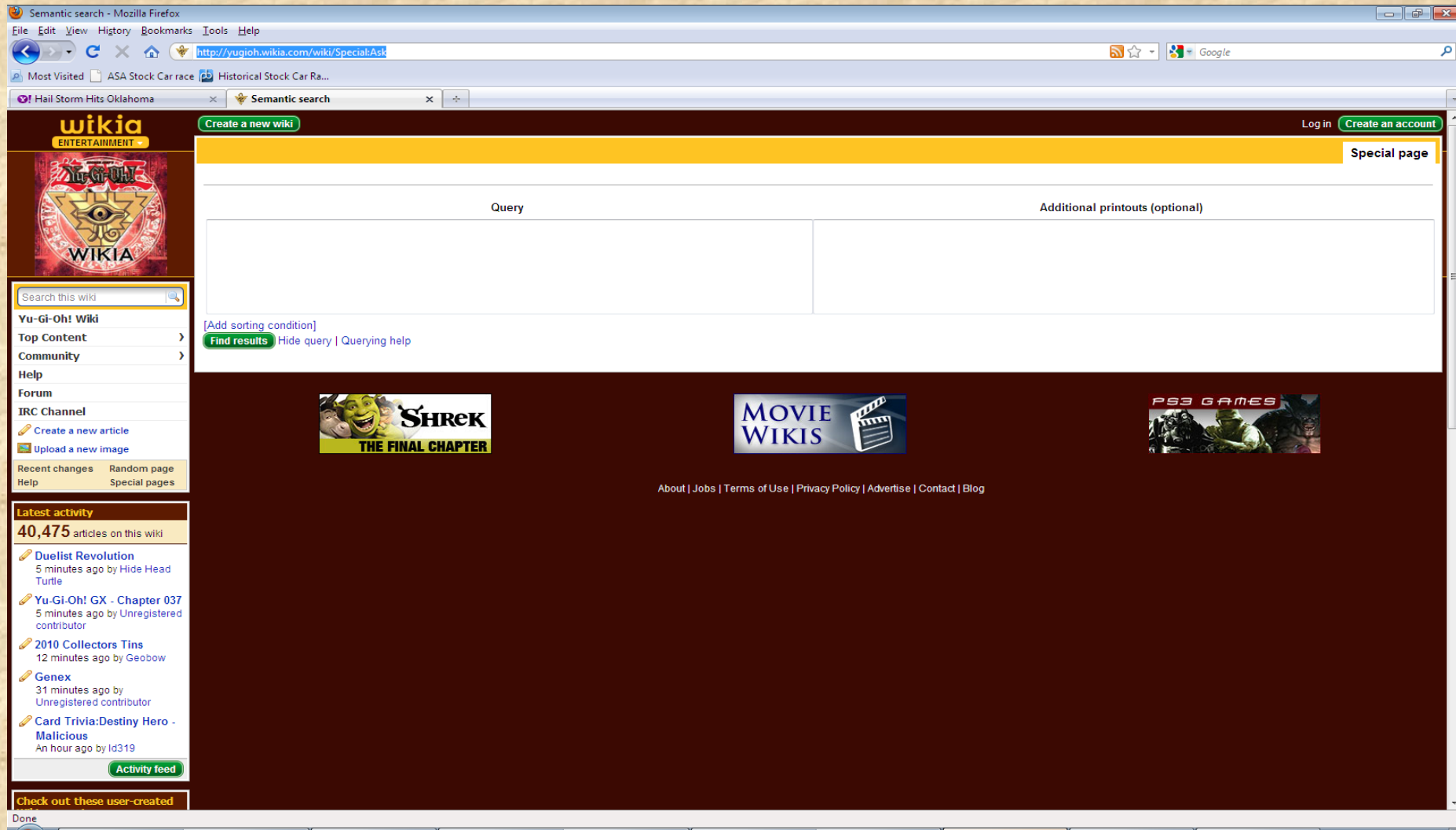
- 3) SMW is an extra strain on machines that we are already asking a lot of.
  - In order to serve as much traffic and databases as we do, our servers are set up significantly different than a typical “lone” wiki database, which serves the database from the webserver.
  - We have two types of database servers: Master for writing, Slaves for reading. In addition, we run our sites from two database clusters.
  - And then for extra fun, Varnish, MemCache and load balancing also factor into our system.

# Things hurting a SMW-Wikia Relationship: Technical

- 3) SMW is an extra strain on machines that we are already asking a lot of.
  - What does this mean then?
    - SMW is another database the system must access when serving the page.
    - Because these database clusters are not serving just one wiki, having a long SMW page load on one site slows the ability of other wikis to be served.
    - Ex. You have a monthly budget of \$200 and a monthly cell phone charge of \$50. In a typical DB system, You only spend small change on a number of other processes. But when you have a lot more things to buy, that \$50 threatens to put you in the red.



# Things hurting a SMW-Wikia Relationship: Technical



- ForceTrace allows us to monitor how much each process takes to be served.
- [http://thirdturn.wikia.com/wiki/Ryan\\_Newman?forcetrace=1&action=purge](http://thirdturn.wikia.com/wiki/Ryan_Newman?forcetrace=1&action=purge)

**BUT ALL IS NOT  
NEGATIVE!!!!**

# Things HELPING a SMW-Wikia Relationship

- Cheap(er) database servers have recently become available, making this a financially viable option.
- The development of Semantic Forms is the greatest usability advance thus far.
- The biggest wikis on Wikia ARE using it.
- The continuing development and drive of the SMW project and its growing acceptance by the larger MediaWiki community.